



# Sam Brownback

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## News Release

June 14, 2000

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## **BROWNBACK CHAIRS HEARING ON LEBANON**

WASHINGTON – As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback today chaired a hearing on the future of Lebanon. His statement follows.

“Although this is a hearing about Lebanon, the recent death of Hafez el Assad makes it all the more important that we hold this hearing today,” Brownback said. “We cannot speak about the future of Lebanon without discussing Syria’s continued occupation.

“Recent weeks have seen the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425. I expected to see the Administration put serious pressure on Syria to remove its 30,000 troops from Lebanon as well. I am looking forward to hearing the intentions of the Administration.

“Syria has turned Lebanon into a satellite state, with a puppet government so demoralized that its leaders will not even appeal for their own independence. Syria and its allies in Tehran manipulate the Lebanese people with weapons and threats, pitting Christian against Sunni, Sunni against Shiite. They sponsor and finance terrorist groups that attack Israel and others, operating like parasites on Lebanese soil.

“There is no reason the U.S. should be subjugating our national principles again and again in the desperate hope for a page in the history books. We need to stand up for democracy for the people of Lebanon and Syria; for an end to occupation for Lebanon; and above all, we need to stand for the disarmament of terrorist groups like Hezbollah, who do nothing more than exploit the people of Lebanon for the benefit of extremists in Damascus and Tehran,” Brownback said.

Witnesses included: Assistant Secretary of State Ned Walker; Dr. Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, and Colonel Charbel Barakat of the South Lebanon Army.